



STAFF REPORT INFORMATION ONLY

Kingston Road Transit Improvements Environmental Assessment – Terms of Reference

Date:	June 8, 2007
To:	Planning and Growth Management Committee
From:	Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning Division
Wards:	All Wards
Reference Number:	Pg070054

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to advise the Committee on the status of the Draft Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Kingston Road Transit Improvements Environmental Assessment (Victoria Park Avenue to Eglinton Avenue) and to advise that City Planning (Transportation Planning) staff are finalizing the ToR for submission to Ministry of the Environment for approval, to proceed with the Environmental Assessment (EA) as described in the Draft ToR.

Financial Impact

There are no financial implications resulting from the adoption of this report.

The approved budgeted costs for conducting the EA study, after the Terms of Reference stage, is \$500,000.00 including all applicable taxes and charges. A Request for Proposals (RFP) will be issued shortly soliciting consultant proposals to assist in completing the study. Funding is available in the 2007 approved Capital Budget for - WBS Element CUR 028 Development Funded Studies. It is assumed that funds not spent in 2007 will be transferred to the 2008 Capital Budget submission.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

At its meeting of December 8, 9, 12, 2005, City Council approved funds for City Planning staff to undertake the Kingston Road Transit Improvements Environmental Assessment.

The study will assess transit service and facility improvements in the Kingston Road corridor between Victoria Park Avenue and Eglinton Avenue, including integration with other transit services such as the Bloor-Danforth subway and GO Transit. It represents an opportunity to support current and anticipated growth in the corridor and adjacent transit catchment areas. The proposed undertaking would provide continuous high frequency and capacity service through the corridor to the downtown core, as well satisfy the high demand for internal trips currently existing and forecasted within the corridor and study area. A diagram of the preliminary study area is attached (Attachment 1).

The section of Kingston Road included in the EA study limits is identified on Map 4 of the City's Official Plan as a "Higher Order Transit Corridor", on Map 2 of the City's Official Plan as an "Avenue", and is also identified as part of the City/Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) "Building a Transit City" strategy.

The Kingston Road Transit Improvements Environmental Assessment is one of several other completed, ongoing or planned transit EA studies being undertaken to improve the connectivity of the transit network/system across the entire City, serve anticipated population and employment growth, and facilitate increased public transit use as a viable means of reducing auto dependency, traffic congestion, and harmful greenhouse gas emissions (see Attachment 2).

Integral to this specific EA will be identifying a preferred approach to providing reliable/efficient transit service along the corridor, better connecting the communities along it, as well as providing a direct connection to the Downtown core from the study area.

COMMENTS

The City Planning Division (Transportation Planning) and TTC have prepared a Draft Terms of Reference for the Kingston Road Transit Improvements EA study (Attachment 3). The Draft ToR has been prepared in accordance with the "Individual EA" process under the *Ontario Environmental Assessment Act*.

The preparation of a ToR is the first stage of an Individual EA study and must be submitted to the Ministry of the Environment (MOE) for approval. The intent of the ToR is to provide the framework for completing the EA. It summarizes the work plan, public consultation plan, range of alternatives, and the specific issues that need to be addressed during the EA study.

The City of Toronto and TTC are co-proponents for this Study. The City Planning Division, specifically the Transportation Planning section will be responsible for the day-to-day project management activities. Staff from the City's Transportation Services Division and Public Consultation and Community Outreach unit will also form part of the core Project Team, and be assisted by staff of other City Divisions.

The Draft ToR includes a description of the approvals process for the ToR. Once the ToR is finalized, it will be submitted to the Ministry of the Environment (MOE) for review and approval. It will also be made available for review by any member of the public for a 30-day period.

Public Consultation

As part of the required public consultation for the Draft ToR, the Project Team held Open House sessions at three locations in the study area during April 2007. The Open Houses were publicized in local and regional newspapers. In addition, approximately 57,000 newsletters were distributed to residents and businesses in the study area.

The Open House sessions were considered to be well attended with a total of approximately 135 recorded visitors for the three sessions. A high level of interest in the project has been expressed by the community and in comments received by City staff from the Open House sessions and from correspondence received in response to the study newsletter and study website. The nature of comments received by the Project Team has been significantly positive with many respondents indicating their desire for improved transit service and to proceed with the EA study, and their intention to participate in future public consultation activities during the EA.

Further details regarding the comments received at the Open Houses and during the subsequent comment period notification, and the notification and promotion of the EA and Open House sessions are documented in the Consultation Record located in the Supporting Documents of the Draft ToR (Attachment 4).

Next Steps

The expected next steps in the ToR process for this EA are described below.

- Submission of ToR to MOE – July 2007
- Public Review of ToR – July/August 2007 (30 days)
- Government Agency Review of ToR – July/ August 2007
- Decision by Minister – October/November 2007
- Conduct EA – October/November 2007 – December 2008

It is expected that staff will formally submit the ToR for this EA to the Ministry of the Environment for review and approval in July 2007. Once received, MOE will also circulate the document to other government agencies and First Nations organizations with a potential interest in the project to determine if any significant issues, EA activities or approval requirements to be addressed during the EA are sufficiently addressed in the ToR. A Notice of Submission of the ToR will be advertised in local newspapers, by mail to individuals and groups on the study mailing list, and on the MOE and City of Toronto website. Any member of the public or any agency will have 30 days to provide comments to MOE on the submitted ToR. Once the comment period is closed, MOE staff

review all the comments, clarify any concerns with City/TTC staff, and forward a report of recommendation to the Minister for a decision. The Minister's decision options are either to approve the ToR, approve with amendments, or reject the ToR. In accordance with Ontario Regulation, the period for MOE review and a decision by the Minister lasts 12 weeks. The Minister's decision is due after those twelve weeks. Recent experience has shown that ToR submissions for public transit EAs of the size and level of expected complexity as the Kingston Road Transit Improvements EA projects are granted approval or approval with amendments by the Minister, and near the expected decision deadline. ToR approval is therefore expected in Early Fall 2007.

If the Minister approves the Terms of Reference, the City/TTC may proceed with conducting the EA. Approval of the ToR does not mean that the project undertaking will be approved. It just gives the City/TTC the authority to proceed with the EA to conduct the evaluation of the alternatives and anticipated environmental effects, carry out additional public consultation and identify the preferred design alternative, as stipulated by the *Environmental Assessment Act*.

In parallel, City staff is also currently preparing a Request for Proposals (RFP) for consulting services to assist in conducting the EA for the project. The RFP is expected to be released in July 2007. Work on the EA study is expected to start by Fall 2007.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

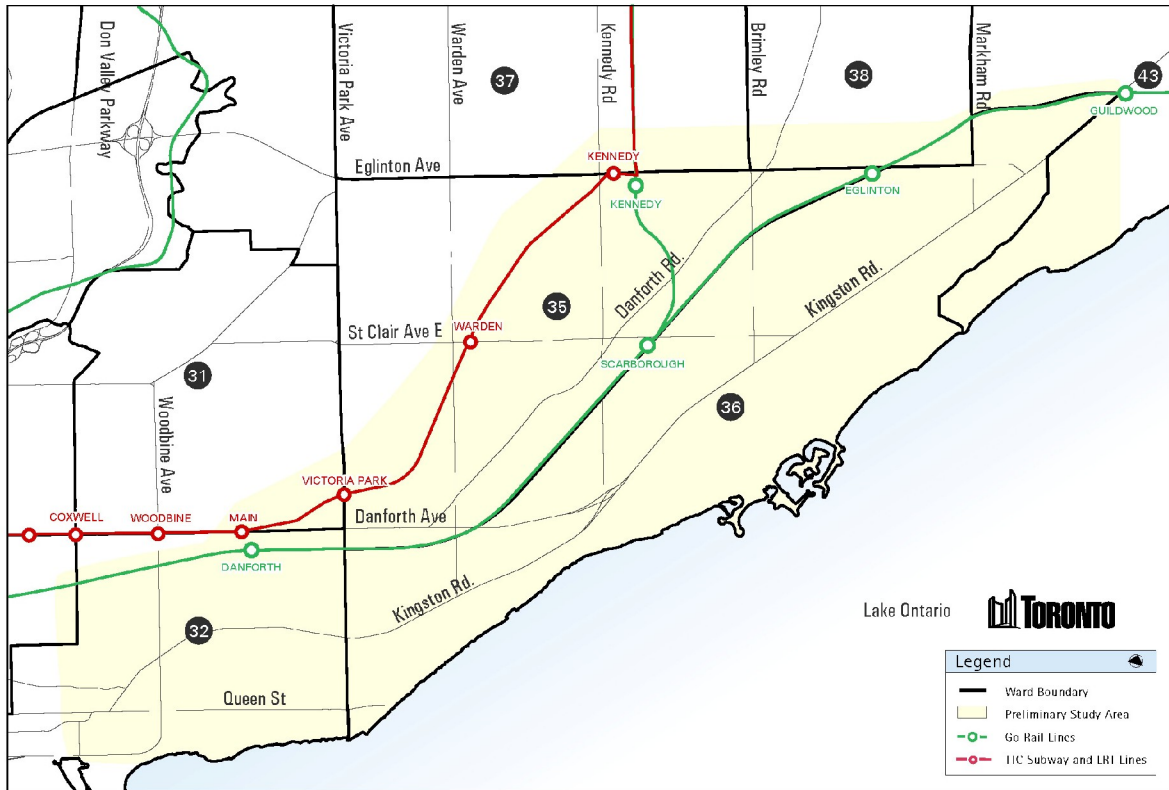
Ted Tyndorf, Chief Planner and Executive Director
City Planning Division

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Study Area
Attachment 2: City/TTC Transit Studies
Attachment 3: Kingston Road Transit Improvements EA – Terms of Reference
Attachment 4: Kingston Road Transit Improvements EA – Supporting Documents

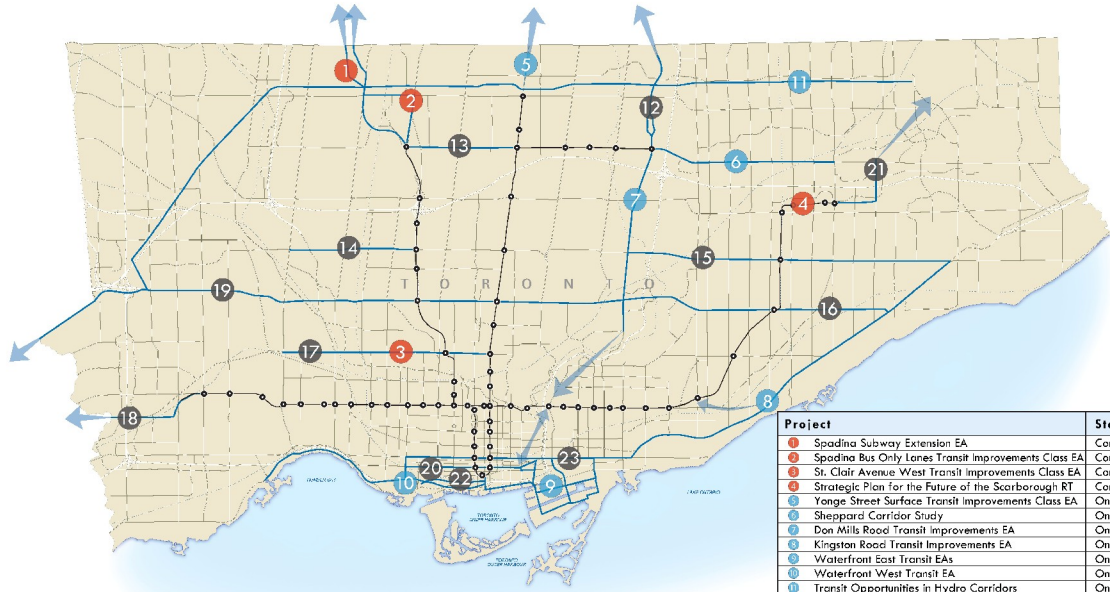
Attachment 1: Study Area

Kingston Rd. Transit Improvements EA



Attachment 2: City/TTC Transit Studies

CITY/TTC TRANSIT STUDIES



LEGEND Not to scale ↗

Existing TTC Subway and RT Lines	Completed Studies
Corridors identified in the Official Plan and the Ridership Growth Strategy	Ongoing Studies
Conceptual Corridor	Future Studies

Project	Status
1 Spadina Subway Extension EA	Completed
2 Spadina Bus Only Lanes Transit Improvements Class EA	Completed
3 St. Clair Avenue West Transit Improvements Class EA	Completed
4 Strategic Plan for the Future of the Scarborough RT	Completed
5 Yonge Street Surface Transit Improvements Class EA	Ongoing
6 Sheppard Corridor Study	Ongoing
7 Don Mills Road Transit Improvements EA	Ongoing
8 Kingston Road Transit Improvements EA	Ongoing
9 Waterfront East Transit EAs	Ongoing
10 Waterfront West Transit EA	Ongoing
11 Transit Opportunities in Hydro Corridors	Ongoing
12 Don Mills Road North Transit Improvements EA	Future Study
13 Sheppard Avenue West Transit Improvements	Future Study
14 Lawrence Avenue West Transit Improvements	Future Study
15 Lawrence Avenue East Transit Improvements	Future Study
16 Eglinton Avenue East Transit Improvements	Future Study
17 St. Clair Streetcar Extension EA	Future Study
18 Bloor West Higher Order Transit	Future Study
19 Eglinton Avenue West Transit Improvements	Future Study
20 King Street Transit Priority	Future Study
21 Scarborough RT Extension	Future Study
22 Bremner Boulevard Transit EA	Future Study
23 Queen Street Transit Priority	Future Study



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